

whatever points of view the question might be considered, it was decidedly an advantage to the people that the jurisdiction should be vested in the Alleppey District Court in preference to Kottayam or Parur. If it was thought that the Member's suggestion, when carried out, would render the institution of a District Court at Parur unnecessary, then a Sub-Court might be established at Alwaye or Parur. Secondly, the Member observed that at present the two *pakuthies* of Kaduthuruthi and Manjur from the Ettumanur taluk were included within the jurisdiction of the Vaikom Munsiff's Court. There was a move for locating a Munsiff's Court at Kaduthuruthi. The Member protested against such a move and submitted that, if an additional Court was going to be started, it must be located at Vaikom. In conclusion, he suggested that, if the pecuniary jurisdiction of the Panchayat Courts was raised to Rs. 50, it would afford great relief to Munsiffs.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

47. Necessity for Courts awarding interest at rates agreed to by the parties in their contracts.

Mr. K. A. Krishna Pattar (Member, Trading Classes, Quilon) represented that, in the matter of award of interest in civil suits, the procedure of Civil Courts in British India was to allow in the decree the rate of interest agreed to by the parties. As that practice was not being followed in Travancore, the people were being put to great hardship and loss. The Member, therefore, requested that his request might be granted.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

48. Need for the opening of an additional Sub-Registry Office in the Karthigappalli taluk.

Mr. K. Kunju Panikkar (Member, Nominated) said that there were only two Sub-Registry Offices in the whole taluk, viz., one at Haripad and the other at Kayankulam. The file of documents was increasing immensely till 1089 when, owing to war, there was a temporary set-back. Since the signing of the peace, the instruments for registration had again gone up necessitating the opening of an additional office in the taluk. If an additional Sub-Registry Office were opened in a suitable locality, it would be very convenient to the people.

Dewan's reply.—The representation will be referred to the Director of Registration.

IV. PRODUCTION.—AGRICULTURE AND OTHER INDUSTRIES.

(1). AGRICULTURE.

49. Reorganisation of the Agricultural Department and the help to be given to the ryots by the Government.

Mr. Geevarghese Kathanar Thomas (Member, Mavelikara taluk) began his representation by thanking the Dewan for the Girls' school given to the taluk. He then said that the condition of the agricultural classes was deteriorating day by day. There were in the State 5,76,937 acres of land under paddy cultivation and the annual yield of paddy was 3,36,000 tons or 3,69,60,000 *paras*. The area under coconut cultivation was 2,50,000 acres and the number of nuts cropped was 32,50,00,000 whose value at the rate of Rs. 5 per 100 was Rs. 1,62,50,000. Taking paddy and coconuts together, each person got per day half a *nali* of rice and 4 *cash*. The statistics of the Registration Department for 1094 also pointed to the large number of cases in which landed property had been transferred by ryots for obtaining loans of money to carry on their agricultural operations. The agricultural loans and the Co-operative Department were not of much use to them. There was no personal credit. It was unquestionable that the Agricultural Department had done its best to improve the agricultural condition, but it felt itself unable to do more. The Director had proposed some measures to ease the agrarian situation. What struck the Member was that a Committee should be appointed consisting of officials and non-officials to make a thorough investigation of the economic problem and suggest remedial measures. The Proceedings of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly

for the past 15 years showed the requirements of the agricultural classes and also the lines on which steps should be taken to improve their condition. The first thing to be done was to spread scientific knowledge by starting a Central Agricultural College at Quilon with agricultural schools in each Division and each taluk. The Member then detailed his scheme of agricultural education. One way of promoting agricultural education among ryots was to encourage the already existing libraries and reading rooms by insisting on their having in them books on agricultural subjects. Each of the educational institutions should have attached to it a demonstration farm. Secondly, the complaint was that there was not enough land for cultivation. At present there was an area of 27,71,000 acres of land, including the area under actual cultivation and under registry. That gave only 58 cents to each person. But the area already registered and not cultivated was about 2 lakhs of acres. Such lands as had been allowed to be left uncultivated for a period of 3 years continuously should be cut up into blocks of 10 acres each and handed over to ryots for cultivation under certain conditions. Large areas of marshy lands and swamps suitable for paddy cultivation within the Forest Reserves should also be thrown open for registry. Thirdly, irrigation was a great and important factor for the improvement of agriculture. Inequality in the amount of expenditure under irrigation was elaborately dealt with. The Member then contended that there would be no use to the ryot if the P. W. D. were entrusted with irrigation works. The proper thing was to entrust them to the Agricultural Department by placing the services of an Engineer at the disposal of the Director. The Member expressed gratification at the fact that the gist of his suggestions had been accepted by Government in a recent G. O. Fourthly, the number of Agricultural officers in the department was far too small for the State, especially when the volume of work yet to be done was taken into consideration. The Member then complimented the Director of Agriculture for the curative measures taken to save the large cocoanut plantations in and about Kayankulam and requested that larger amounts be sanctioned for the Agricultural Department so as to get the greatest benefit out of the department. Fifthly, the manure question had been one of great trouble to agriculturists. The department had shown to the ryot the value of the use of scientific manures and people had also become convinced of it. As they were not able to purchase the departmental and other scientific manures so necessary for increasing the yield, more facilities should be offered. In that connection the Member spoke of the huge waste involved in the export of fish and other manures outside the State and suggested the total prohibition of the export of such manures or the levy of a prohibitive export duty, in the interests of agriculture. The Member submitted that the night-soil from the various T. I. C's. might be sold to agriculturists on easy terms and urged the necessity for introducing the credit system in regard to the sale of manure by the department. Sixthly, the Member referred to the great hardship suffered by the people in securing loans under the Agricultural Loans Regulation, explained the cumbersome procedure which was the real obstacle in their way and requested that the Agricultural Department be entrusted with the work. He also observed that the Co-operative Department was not of much help to the agriculturist. The best course, according to the Member, was to ear-mark about Rs. 5 lakhs every year for agricultural loans and see that all applications for loans were, as far as possible, granted. Seventhly, arrangements should be made for finding a ready sale in proper markets outside for the agricultural produce in the State, as good prices were not being obtained for them at present in the State. Eighthly, the formation of Agricultural Boards consisting of the officers of the Agricultural Department and the leading ryots was suggested, as also frequent conferences of such Boards where lectures on agricultural subjects should be delivered for the benefit of the ryots. Ninthly, all encouragement should be given for the breeding of sheep, goats, fowls, &c., on a scientific basis. Lastly, the agricultural classes should have all facilities for easy locomotion, such as roads, canals, &c. and for the transport of their produce. In several taluks want of means of communication was a serious handicap to the pursuit of agriculture.

Dewan's reply.—The several suggestions made by the Member will receive due consideration.